

THE FRESNO BEE

THE REPUBLICAN

22 1964

Fresno, California, Friday Evening, November 13

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Fresno Doctor Recalls Dallas Hospital Scene

By Karl M. Widder

Dr. Charles Fogge was at home eating lunch in Dallas five years ago today, when a television announcer said that President John F. Kennedy had been shot.

Fogge did not stop to finish his lunch. He was an intern at Dallas Parkland Hospital, and he knew that if anything happened to the president in Dallas, he would be taken to Parkland.

"I was on the surgical service at that time and assigned," about this time, Charles Fogge to the emergency room," says the hospital administrator. Fogge, now practicing in Texas, came along and I was let in."

"I ran the two blocks from the Fresno recalls, my apartment to the hospital. All the other patients had and went directly to the back door that leads to the emergency section."

"There were doctor, surgeons, men, police and other people standing around. I had my black bag with me and this gained me admission through the first door."

Confusion

The corridor and lobby inside the entrance was a mass of crying, stricken Texans and members of the president's party. No one seemed to know what was going on inside the closed door leading to the emergency room's surgical suite.

Guards barred his way, but

"All the other patients had been cleared out of the section. Mrs. Kennedy, several doctors and nurses were waiting outside of Surgical Room No. 1 where the president had been taken. I remember thinking how tall and how composed the president's wife was at the time."

Splattered With Blood

"Mrs. Kennedy (now Mrs. Aristotle Onassis) was splattered with blood from the wound in the back of Kennedy's head. A wound so devastating that a considerable of the skull was missing."

Fogge reached the hospital

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Doctor

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about 15 minutes after I was let in and been rushed there from the Dallas parade route where the assassin's shot had struck him."

Fogge was on duty two days later when a man named Lee Harvey Oswald, accused of firing the shot, also was taken to Parkland.

"Oswald was operated on at severe wounds in his back, kidney and spleen repaired," he says. "His heart stopped but the surgeons were able to get it started again. A few minutes later, it stopped again and asking we could do and it did not start pumping to carry blood."

Weeks before Nov. 22, 1963, everyone in Parkland knew that it had been designated as the hospital to be used if anything untoward happened during Kennedy's visit to Dallas.

"When the first call came that something was being brought in, everyone thought it was a truck, a limo," Fogge says. "I was all over here to see and something I'll never forget."

Went to back door (at about the time Ruby was there? Someone should ask him. this)